

**EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Kelly McGlashen, #60,927, on 11/4/09.

2. The application has been amended as follows:

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

3. **Claims 7, 9, 12, and 14** have been **canceled**.
4. **Claim 13** has been **amended** as follows:

CLAIM 13 (Currently Amended). The connecting piece of claim 5, [[11]] wherein a the circumferential length of the a-smooth portion[[s]] is about half as long as a the-circumferential length of an adjacent straight portion.

**REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE:**

5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

With regard to claim 11, the prior art of record does not teach or suggest a connecting piece with a body of plastic; a metal insert with a thread positioned at one end of the connecting piece; a gripping element disposed around the outer surface of the connecting piece with at least two straight portions arranged such that the two straight portions on opposite sides of the connecting piece are parallel, the gripping element being formed of two or more ribs disposed circumferentially around the connecting piece, each rib forming a continuous ring around the outer surface of the connecting piece; whereby the gripping element is formed such that a tool surrounding the gripping element slips before at least one of the thread and the basic structure of the connecting piece gets damaged.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

**CONCLUSION:**

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Fannie Kee whose telephone number is (571) 272-1820. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Aaron M Dunwoody/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3679

/F. K./  
Examiner, Art Unit 3679  
November 12, 2009